US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Welcome to the US Army Corps of Engineers

Colorado Service Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has established a Colorado Service Office in Denver, Colorado to service the water and related land resources needs of the State of Colorado; and to represent the four Corps' Districts that perform work in Colorado: Albuquerque, Sacramento, Omaha, and Kansas City. As the manager of this office, I am responsible for overall implementation of the Corps' business development programs for the State of Colorado. This includes not only traditional civil works (water resources) activities but also support for other Corps interests.

The Corps of Engineers offers a variety of programs to address water and related land resources problems, needs, and opportunities. Our expertise is broad-based, focusing in the areas of hydrology, sedimentation, hydraulic engineering, civil engineering, geotechnical engineering, cost engineering, structural engineering, architecture, economics, plan formulation and evaluation, real estate, project management, and the environmental sciences.

We are able to assist cities and counties with technical and planning assistance; flood plain management; flood damage reduction; watershed planning; emergency stream bank stabilization; ecosystem restoration; and hazardous and toxic waste study and remediation.

I am here to serve you. I invite communities, cities, counties, and state agencies to contact me to learn more about our programs and how to request assistance. This information is also available on the Colorado Water Conservation Board website (flood protection toggle).

Sandra L. Rayl
US Army Corps of Engineers
Colorado Service Office
1600 Broadway, Suite 1070
Denver, Colorado 80202

(303) 831-6052 (phone)
(303) 831-6067 (fax)
E-mail sandy.l.rayl@usace.army.mil
CWCB website www.cwcb.state.co.us

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Welcome to the US Army Corps of Engineers

Colorado Service Office

T

The following information describes the overall mission and capabilities of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and those programs that are of interest to Colorado.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the federal government's largest water resources development and management agency, with both a civil works mission (*e.g.*, flood damage reduction, navigation, and ecosystem restoration), and a military construction mission to support the needs of the Army and Air Force. The Corps' water resources program began in 1824 when Congress appropriated funds to improve river navigation. Over time, the Corps' mission has expanded to include flood damage reduction; floodplain management; emergency flood response; beach erosion control; aquatic and riparian ecosystem restoration; hydropower generation; municipal and industrial water supply; recreation; handling and disposal of hazardous, toxic, and radioactive waste, including Superfund site cleanup; and regulation of development in navigable waters.

The Corps also participates in projects requiring special legislation, such as riverfront development, recreation, combined sewer overflows, construction of municipal water and wastewater facilities, and brownfields. If desired, the Corps can assist you in drafting suitable legislative bill language.

This information packet summarizes the primary Corps of Engineers' programs that are of interest in Colorado.

- ⇒ **Six steps to a Civil Works Project.** The development of a Corps of Engineers General Investigations civil works project follows six steps: problem perception; request for Federal action; study the problem and report preparation; report review and approval; congressional authorization; and project implementation.
- ⇒ **Continuing Authorities Programs**. For smaller projects, not requiring congressional authorization, Congress delegated its authority to approve certain projects, up to specified dollar amounts (subject to the availability of funds) to the Chief of Engineers.
- ⇒ **Planning Assistance to States and Flood Plain Management Studies.** These programs provide technical planning and engineering assistance relating to a variety of water resources issues. They do not, however, provide for site-specific design or construction.

For additional information about these programs or to obtain sample letters of request, please contact the Colorado Service Office.

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Six Steps to a Civil Works Project

Step 1 – Problem Perception

Local community/ government contacts the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to discuss Corps programs that can resolve or address water or related land resources problems and needs that are beyond the local community's capability to resolve or address.

Step 2 – Request for Federal Action/Assistance

The local government (non-Federal sponsor) sends a letter to the Corps requesting assistance. For small projects, technical assistance can generally be accomplished without the need for specific congressional authorization under the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). Should congressional authorization be required for a particular study/project, the non-Federal sponsor would contact their congressional delegation to seek a specific authorization/study resolution. Members of Congress request study authorizations/resolutions through the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee or the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Step 3 – Study Problem and Report Preparation

Once authorization for a study has been received, the study is assigned to a Corps District office. The funds to initiate a 12-month reconnaissance study must be included in the President's budget and appropriated in the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act. The District office will conduct an expedited reconnaissance study at full Federal cost to determine if there is a Federal interest to proceed to the feasibility phase. If the study continues beyond the reconnaissance phase, the non-Federal sponsor must agree to share the cost of the feasibility phase study. Public involvement is an integral part of the feasibility phase planning process, including the review of the draft feasibility report that incorporates a draft environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS).

Step 4 – Report Review and Approval

The District office submits the draft feasibility report to the Corps Division office and to headquarters (HQUSACE) for concurrent policy review. Once outstanding policy issues have been resolved, the draft report is available for public review. Within 180 days of the public review, the Division Engineer submits the final report to HQUSACE and issues a public notice announcing completion of the feasibility report. HQUSACE administers a 30-day State and Agency (S&A) review and files the final EIS (FEIS) with

the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After the S&A review and final policy certification have been completed, HQUSACE will prepare the final Chief of Engineers Report for the Chief's signature and also prepare the final Record of Decision for signature by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA (CW)). Once the Chief of Engineers signs the report, signifying approval of the project recommendation, the Chief of Staff submits the Chief of Engineers Report, the final feasibility report and FEIS, the unsigned ROD, and draft letters for transmitting the report to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Congress to the ASA (CW). The ASA (CW) will review the documents to determine the level of administration support for the Chief of Engineers' recommendation and formally submit the report to OMB. OMB will review the recommendation to determine its relationship to the President's program. OMB will then provide a clearance letter to ASA (CW) either allowing the release of the report to Congress, subject to whatever changes OMB deems necessary, or objecting to the release. Assuming no objections, the ASA (CW) will sign the ROD and transmit the Chief of Engineers Report, the state and agency review letters, the signed ROD, and the final feasibility report/ EIS to Congress (the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives) where they are referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Step 5 – Congressional Authorization

Following committee hearings, Congress includes the authorization for a civil works project in a Water Resources Development Act (Omnibus Bill). Occasionally, a Corps proposal is authorized by separate legislation or as part of another bill.

Step 6 – Project Implementation

New projects are included in the President's budget based on national priorities and the anticipated completion date of plans and specifications prior to contract award. Budget recommendations are based on evidence of support by the State and by the ability and willingness of non-Federal sponsors to provide their share of the project cost. Once Congress appropriates the Federal share of funds for new start projects (this normally occurs in the annual Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act), the Secretary of the Army and the non-Federal sponsor will execute the formal Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) to initiate project implementation. The PCA spells out the cost sharing responsibilities of the Corps and non-Federal sponsor, and the obligations of the parties regarding project implementation, operation, and maintenance. During the pre-construction engineering and design phase, the District will complete the plans and specifications for the first construction contract; plans and specifications for subsequent contracts will be completed during the construction phase. The Corps will then award and administer the construction contract. After construction, the Corps will conduct periodic inspections to assure project performance.

US Army Corps of Engineers ®

Summary of Corps of Engineers Authorities (Continuing Authorities Program and Technical Assistance)

Congress has authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to plan, design, and construct certain types of water resource and ecosystem restoration projects without additional, specific congressional authorization. Collectively, these authorities are referred to as the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). Because no congressional authorization is needed, CAP projects generally proceed more quickly than those pursued under the General Investigations program. The CAP authorities applicable to the State of Colorado are summarized below. These programs pertain to stream bank and shoreline protection of public facilities, flood damage reduction, aquatic ecosystem restoration, project modifications for improvement of the environment and channel snagging and clearing for flood control.

EMERGENCY STREAMBANK AND SHORELINE PROTECTION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES (Section 14)

Section 14, Flood Control Act of 1946 (Public Law 79-526), as amended authorizes the Corps to plan and construct emergency stream bank and shoreline protection projects to protect endangered highways, highway bridge approaches, and public facilities such as water and sewer lines, churches, and public and nonprofit schools and hospitals, and other nonprofit public facilities in order to eliminate the threat to public safety and to prevent interruption of vital services. The maximum federal contribution for study, design, and construction of a project under this authority is $1,000,000 per site.

SMALL FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION PROJECTS (Section 205)

Section 205, Flood Control Act of 1948 (Public Law 80-858), as amended authorizes the Corps to study and construct structural and/or nonstructural projects to reduce damages caused by overbank flooding. Proposed projects must be technically and economically feasible and environmentally acceptable. Structural projects may include levees, floodwalls, detention dams, and diversion channels. Non-structural projects may include flood proofing, relocation of structures, and flood warning systems. The maximum federal contribution for study, design, and construction of projects under this authority is $7,000,000 per project.

SEC. 1135 PROJECT MODIFICATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Section 1135, Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (PL 99-662) as amended authorizes the Corps to modify existing Corps structures and/or operations of its water resources projects in order to restore the environment and/or to construct new projects to restore areas degraded by Corps projects. A proposed project must be technically feasible, consistent with the authorized project purposes; environmentally acceptable; and provide cost effective environmental benefits. The maximum federal contribution for study, design, and construction of projects under this authority is $5,000,000 per project.

AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION (Section 206)

Section 206, Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-303) authorizes the Corps to undertake projects to restore or protect the aquatic ecosystem for the purpose of improving environmental quality. A proposed project must be technically feasible, environmentally acceptable, and provide cost effective environmental benefits. The maximum federal contribution for study, design, and construction of projects under this authority is $5,000,000 per project.

CHANNEL SNAGGING AND CLEARING FOR FLOOD CONTROL (Section 208)

Section 208, Flood Control Act of 1954 (Public Law 83-780), as amended authorizes the Corps to study and construct in-stream clearing and snagging projects to reduce damages caused by overbank flooding if the projects are determined to be economically feasible. The maximum federal contribution for study, design, and construction of these projects is $500,000 per project.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Two additional programs that are not part of the Continuing Authorities Program but operate in much the same manner (*i.e.*, they do not require specific congressional authorization) are the Planning Assistance to States (PAS) program and the Flood Plain Management Services (FPMS) program. These technical assistance programs are briefly described in the following paragraphs.

PLANNING ASSISTANCE TO STATES

Section 22, Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-251), as amended authorizes the Corps to provide technical planning and engineering assistance to states, counties, local governments, and federally recognized Indian tribes in preparing comprehensive plans for the development, utilization, and conservation of water and related land resources. Under this program, the Corps can provide assistance in all areas related to water resources development in which the Corps has

expertise. The studies generally involve the analysis of existing data for planning purposes using standard engineering techniques; they do not include detailed design for project construction. Assistance is limited to $500,000 in Federal funds per State or Tribe per year, based on available appropriations.

Typical studies may include:

- Water supply and demand studies
- Water quality studies
- Environmental conservation/restoration studies
- Wetlands evaluation studies
- Dam safety/failure studies
- Flood damage reduction studies
- Flood plain management studies

FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The objective of Section 206 of the Flood Control Act of 1960 (Public Law 86-645), as amended is to help the public understand the options for dealing with flood hazards and to promote prudent use and management of flood plains. Flood plain management services (FPMS) are provided to state, regional and local governments, Indian tribes, and other non-Federal public agencies without charge, based on available appropriations. Services provided to other Federal agencies and the private sector are on a 100-percent cost-recovery basis.

The FPMS Program provides a full range of technical services and planning guidance to support effective flood plain management.

⇒ **General Technical Services.** General technical services are designed to develop or interpret site-specific data relating to obstructions to flood flows; flood formation and timing; flood depths or stages; floodwater velocities; the extent, duration, and frequency of flooding; and flood loss potential before and after flood plain management measures are in place.

⇒ **General Planning Guidance.** On a larger scale, the program provides assistance and guidance in the form of "Special Studies" on all aspects of flood plain management planning including the possible impacts of off-flood plain land use changes on the physical, socio-economic, and environmental conditions of the flood plain. Services are also available to help communities comply with National Flood Insurance program standards.

Special Studies may include:

- Flood plain delineation/flood hazard evaluation studies
- Dam break analysis studies
- Hurricane evacuation studies
- Flood warning/preparedness studies
- Regulatory floodway studies
- Comprehensive flood plain management studies
- Flood damage reduction studies

- Urbanization impact studies
- Storm water management studies
- Flood proofing studies
- Inventory of flood prone structures.

⇒ **Guides, Pamphlets, and Supporting Studies.** Guides and pamphlets relating to flood proofing techniques, flood plain regulations, flood plain occupancy, natural flood plain resources, and other related aspects of flood plain management are available or can be produced. The FPMS program also conducts workshops and seminars to demonstrate non-structural flood plain management measures, such as flood proofing.